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Chas Gunn
1812

THE

WEST INDIES,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

THE

WEST INDIES,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JAMES MONTGOMERY,

AUTHOR OF 'THE WANDERER OF SWITZERLAND,' &c.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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TO

THE PUBLIC.

THE Poem of 'THE WEST INDIES,' originally published by MR BOWYER, in his splendid volume on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, is now presented in a form more convenient for general perusal.

'There are objections against the title and plan of this piece, which will occur to almost every reader. The Author will not anticipate them: he will only observe, that the title seemed the best, and the plan the most eligible, which *he* could adapt to a subject so various and excursive, yet so familiar and exhausted, as the African Slave Trade,—a subject which had become antiquated, by frequent, minute, and disgusting exposure;

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which afforded no opportunity to awaken, suspend, and delight curiosity, by a subtle and surprising developement of plot; and concerning which public feeling had been wearied into insensibility, by the agony of interest which the question excited, during three-and-twenty years of almost incessant discussion. That trade is at length abolished. May its memory be immortal, that henceforth it may be known only *by* its memory!'— This extract from the preface to the former edition of 'The West Indies' will probably be a sufficient introduction to the present.

Of the lesser pieces that follow, it is unnecessary to say more than that they are offered as humble candidates for the same public favour (if they be deemed worthy of it) which their predecessors, accompanying 'The Wanderer of Switzerland,' have most liberally obtained.

Sheffield, May 17, 1810.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The West Indies,	1
The Harp of Sorrow,	83
Pope's Willow,	87
A Walk in Spring,	93
Ranz des Vaches,	104
The Swiss Cowherd's Song,	106
La Quercia,	108
The Oak,	109
The Dial,	110
The Roses,	113
To Agnes,	116
An Epitaph,	118
The Old Man's Song,	119
The Glow-Worm,	122
Bolehill Trees,	124
The Mole-hill,	129
The Cast-away Ship,	142
The Sequel,	149
M. S.,	151

THE

WEST INDIES.

A POEM, IN FOUR PARTS.

WRITTEN IN HONOUR OF THE ABOLITION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE BY THE BRITISH LEGISLATURE, IN 1807.

"*Receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant,—a brother beloved.*"

St Paul's Epist. to Philemon, v. 15, 16.

THE

WEST INDIES.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction ; on the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—The Mariner's Compass.—Columbus.—The Discovery of America.—The West Indian Islands.—The Charibs.—Their Extermination.

'THY chains are broken, Africa, be free!'
Thus saith the island-empress of the sea;
Thus saith Britannia.—O, ye winds and waves!
Waft the glad tidings to the land of slaves;
Proclaim on Guinea's coast, by Gambia' side,
And as far as Niger rolls his eastern tide,[1]

Through radiant realms, beneath the burning zone,
Where Europe's curse is felt, her name unknown,
'Thus saith Britannia, empress of the sea,
'Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free!'

Long lay the ocean-paths from man conceal'd;
Light came from heaven,—the magnet was reveal'd,
A surer star to guide the seaman's eye
Than the pale glory of the northern sky;
Alike ordain'd to shine by night and day,
Through calm and tempest, with unsetting ray;
Where'er the mountains rise, the billows roll,
Still with strong impulse turning to the pole,
True as the sun is to the morning true,
Though light as film, and trembling as the dew.

Then man no longer plied with timid oar,
And failing heart, along the windward shore;
Broad to the sky he turn'd his fearless sail,
Defied the adverse, woo'd the favouring gale,

Bared to the storm his adamantine breast,
Or soft on ocean's lap lay down to rest;
While free as clouds the liquid ether sweep,
His white-wing'd vessels coursed the unbounded deep;
From clime to clime the wanderer loved to roam,
The waves his heritage, the world his home.

Then first Columbus, with the mighy hand
Of grasping genius, weigh'd the sea and land;
The floods o'erbalanced:—where the tide of light,
Day after day, roll'd down the gulph of night,
There seem'd one waste of waters:—long in vain
His spirit brooded o'er the Atlantic main;
When sudden, as creation burst from nought,
Sprang a new world through his stupendous thought,
Light, order, beauty!—While his mind explored
The unveiling mystery, his heart adored;
Where'er sublime imagination trod,
He heard the voice, he saw the face of God.

Far from the western cliffs he cast his eye
O'er the wide ocean stretching to the sky:
In calm magnificence the sun declined,
And left a paradise of clouds behind:
Proud at his feet, with pomp of pearl and gold,
The billows in a sea of glory roll'd.

'— Ah! on this sea of glory might I sail,
'Track the bright sun, and pierce the eternal veil
'That hides those lands, beneath Hesperian skies,
'Where day-light sojourns till our morrow rise!'

Thoughtful he wander'd on the beach alone;
Mild o'er the deep the vesper planet shone,
The eye of evening, brightening through the west
Till the sweet moment when it shut to rest:
'Whither, O, golden Venus! art thou fled?
'Not in the ocean-chambers lies thy bed;
'Round the dim world thy glittering chariot drawn
'Pursues the twilight, or precedes the dawn;

'Thy beauty noon and midnight never see,
'The morn and eve divide the year with thee.'

Soft fell the shades, till Cynthia's slender bow
Crested the farthest wave, then sunk below:
'Tell me, resplendent guardian of the night,
'Circling the sphere in thy perennial flight,
'What secret path of heaven thy smiles adorn,
'What nameless sea reflects thy gleaming horn?'

Now earth and ocean vanish'd, all serene
The starry firmament alone was seen;
Through the slow, silent hours, he watch'd the host
Of midnight suns in western darkness lost,
Till Night himself, on shadowy pinions borne,
Fled o'er the mighty waters, and the morn
Danced on the mountains:—'Lights of heaven!' he cried,
'Lead on;—I go to win a glorious bride;

'Fearless o'er gulphs unknown I urge my way,
'Where peril prowls, and shipwreck lurks for prey:
'Hope swells my sail;—in spirit I behold
'That maiden world, twin-sister of the old,
'By nature nursed beyond the jealous sea,
'Denied to ages, but betrothed to me.'[2]

The winds were prosperous, and the billows bore
The brave adventurer to the promised shore;
Far in the west, array'd in purple light,
Dawn'd the new world on his enraptured sight:
Not Adam, loosen'd from the encumbering earth,
Waked by the breath of God to instant birth,
With sweeter, wilder wonder gazed around,
When life within, and light without he found;
When all creation rushing o'er his soul,
He seem'd to live and breathe throughout the whole.
So felt Columbus, when, divinely fair,
At the last look of resolute despair,

The Hesperian isles, from distance dimly blue,
With gradual beauty open'd on his view.
In that proud moment, his transported mind
The morning and the evening worlds combined,
And made the sea, that sunder'd them before,
A bond of peace, uniting shore to shore.

Vain, visionary hope! rapacious Spain
Follow'd her hero's triumph o'er the main,
Her hardy sons in fields of battle tried,
Where Moor and Christian desperately died,
A rabid race, fanatically bold,
And steel'd to cruelty by lust of gold,
Traversed the waves, the unknown world explored,
The cross their standard, but their faith the sword;
Their steps were graves; o'er prostrate realms they trod;
They worshipp'd Mammon while they vow'd to God.

Let nobler bards in loftier numbers tell
How Cortez conquer'd, Montezuma fell;
How grim Pizarro's ruffian arm o'erthrew
The sun's resplendent empire in Peru;
How, like a prophet, old Las Casas stood,
And raised his voice against a sea of blood,
Whose chilling waves recoil'd while he foretold
His country's ruin by avenging gold.
—That gold, for which unpitied Indians fell,
That gold at once the snare and scourge of hell,
Thenceforth by righteous heaven was doom'd to shed
Unmingled curses on the spoiler's head;
For gold the Spaniard cast his soul away,—
His gold and he were every nation's prey.

But themes like these would ask an angel-lyre,
Language of light and sentiment of fire;
Give me to sing, in melancholy strains,
Of Charib martyrdoms and negro chains;

One race by tyrants rooted from the earth,
One doom'd to slavery by the taint of birth!

Where first his drooping sails Columbus furl'd,
And sweetly rested in another world,
Amidst the heaven-reflecting ocean, smiles
A constellation of elysian isles;
Fair as Orion when he mounts on high,
Sparkling with midnight splendour from the sky:
They bask beneath the sun's meridian rays,
When not a shadow breaks the boundless blaze;
The breath of ocean wanders through their vales
In morning breezes and in evening gales:
Earth from her lap perennial verdure pours,
Ambrosial fruits, and amaranthine flowers;
O'er the wild mountains and luxuriant plains,
Nature in all the pomp of beauty reigns,
In all the pride of freedom.—NATURE FREE
Proclaims that MAN was born for liberty:

She flourishes where'er the sun-beams play
O'er living fountains, sallying into day;
She withers where the waters cease to roll,
And night and winter stagnate round the pole:
Man too, where freedom's beams and fountains rise,
Springs from the dust, and blossoms to the skies;
Dead to the joys of light and life, the slave
Clings to the clod; his root is in the grave;
Bondage is winter, darkness, death, despair,
Freedom the sun, the sea, the mountains, and the air!

In placid indolence supinely blest,
A feeble race these beauteous isles possess'd;
Untamed, untaught, in arts and arms unskill'd,
Their patrimonial soil they rudely till'd,
Chased the free rovers of the savage wood;
Insnared the wild-bird, swept the scaly flood,
Shelter'd in lowly huts their fragile forms
From burning suns and desolating storms;

Or when the halcyon sported on the breeze,
In light canoes they skimm'd the ripling seas;
Their lives in dreams of soothing languor flew,
No parted joys, no future pains they knew,
The passing moment all their bliss or care;
Such as the sires had been, the children were
From age to age; as waves upon the tide
Of stormless time, they calmly lived and died.

Dreadful as hurricanes, athwart the main
Rush'd the fell legions of invading Spain;
With fraud and force, with false and fatal breath,
(Submission bondage, and resistance death,)
They swept the isles. In vain the simple race
Kneel'd to the iron sceptre of their grace,
Or with weak arms their fiery vengeance braved;
They came, they saw, they conquer'd, they enslaved,
And they destroy'd;—the generous heart they broke,
They crush'd the timid neck beneath the yoke;

Where'er to battle march'd their grim array,
The sword of conquest plough'd resistless way;
Where'er from cruel toil they sought repose,
Around, the fires of devastation rose.
The Indian, as he turn'd his head in flight,
Beheld his cottage flaming through the night,
And, midst the shrieks of murder on the wind,
Heard the mute blood-hound's death-step close behind.

The conflict o'er, the valiant in their graves,
The wretched remnant dwindled into slaves;
Condemn'd in pestilential cells to pine,
Delving for gold amidst the gloomy mine.
The sufferer, sick of life-protracting breath,
Inhaled with joy the fire-damp blast of death:
—Condemn'd to fell the mountain palm on high,
That cast its shadow from the evening sky,
Ere the tree trembled to his feeble stroke,
The woodman languish'd, and his heart-strings broke:

—Condemn'd in torrid noon, with palsied hand,
To urge the slow plough o'er the obdurate land,
The labourer, smitten by the sun's fierce ray,
A corpse along the unfinish'd furrow lay.
O'erwhelm'd at length with ignominious toil,
Mingling their barren ashes with the soil,
Down to the dust the Charib people pass'd,
Like autumn foliage withering in the blast:
The whole race sunk beneath the oppressor's rod,
And left a blank among the works of God.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

THE

WEST INDIES.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.

The Cane.—Africa.—The Negro.—The Slave-carrying Trade.—The Means and Resources of the Slave Trade.—The Portuguese.—Dutch,—Danes,—French,—and English in America.

Among the bowers of paradise, that graced
Those islands of the world-dividing waste,
Where towering cocoas waved their graceful locks,
And vines luxuriant cluster'd round the rocks;
Where orange-groves perfumed the circling air,
With verdure, flowers, and fruit for ever fair;
Gay mirtle-foliage track'd the winding rills,
And cedar forests slumber'd on the hills;

—An eastern plant, ingrafted on the soil,[1]
Was till'd for ages with consuming toil;
No tree of knowledge with forbidden fruit,
Death in the taste, and ruin at the root,
Yet in its growth were good and evil found,
It bless'd the planter, but it cursed the ground;
While with vain wealth it gorged the master's hoard,
And spread with manna his luxurious board,
Its culture was perdition to the slave,
It sapp'd his life, and flourish'd on his grave.

When the fierce spoiler from remorseless Spain
Tasted the balmy spirit of the cane,
(Already had his rival in the west,
From the rich reed ambrosial sweetness press'd,)
Dark through his thoughts the miser purpose roll'd
To turn its hidden treasures into gold.
But at his breath, by pestilent decay,
The Indian tribes were swiftly swept away;

Silence and horror o'er the isles were spread,
The living seem'd the spectres of the dead.
The Spaniard saw ; no sigh of pity stole,
No pang of conscience touch'd his sullen soul ;
The tiger weeps not o'er the kid ;—he turns
His flashing eyes abroad, and madly burns
For nobler victims, and for warmer blood :
Thus on the Charib shore the tyrant stood,
Thus cast his eyes with fury o'er the tide,
And far beyond the gloomy gulph descried
Devoted Africa : he burst away,
And with a yell of transport grasp'd his prey.

Where the stupendous Mountains of the Moon
Cast their broad shadows o'er the realms of noon ;
From rude Caffraria, where the giraffes browse,
With stately heads among the forest boughs,
To Atlas, where Numidian lions glow
With torrid fire beneath eternal snow :

From Nubian hills, that hail the dawning day,
To Guinea's coast, where evening fades away,
Regions immense, unsearchable, unknown,
Bask in the splendour of the solar zone;
A world of wonders,—where creation seems
No more the work of Nature but her dreams;
Great, wild, and beautiful, beyond controul,
She reigns in all the freedom of her soul;
Where none can check her bounty when she showers
O'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flowers;
None brave her fury, when, with whirlwind breath,
And earthquake step, she walks abroad with death;
O'er boundless plains she holds her fiery flight,
In terrible magnificence of light;
At blazing noon pursues the evening breeze,
Through the dun gloom of realm-o'ershadowing trees,
Her thirst at Nile's mysterious fountain quells,
Or bathes in secrecy where Niger swells
An inland ocean, on whose jasper rocks
With shells and sea-flower-wreaths she binds her locks:

She sleeps on isles of velvet verdure, placed
Midst sandy gulphs and shoals for ever waste;
She guides her countless flocks to cherish'd rills,
And feeds her cattle on a thousand hills;
Her steps the wild bees welcome through the vale,
From every blossom that embalms the gale;
The slow unwieldy river-horse she leads
Through the deep waters, o'er the pasturing meads;
And climbs the mountains that invade the sky,
To sooth the eagle's nestlings when they cry.
At sun-set, when voracious monsters burst
From dreams of blood, awaked by maddening thirst;
When the lorn caves, in which they shrunk from light,
Ring with wild echoes through the hideous night;
When darkness seems alive, and all the air
Is one tremendous uproar of despair,
Horror and agony;—on her they call;
She hears their clamour, she provides for all,
Leads the light leopard on his eager way,
And goads the gaunt hyæna to his prey.

In these romantic regions Man grows wild;
Here dwells the negro, Nature's outcast child,
Scorn'd by his brethren; but his mother's eye,
That gazes on him from her warmest sky,
Sees in his flexile limbs untutor'd grace,
Power on his forehead, beauty in his face;
Sees in his breast, where lawless passions rove,
The heart of friendship and the home of love;
Sees in his mind, where desolation reigns,
Fierce as his clime, uncultured as his plains,
A soil where virtue's fairest flowers might shoot,
And trees of science bend with glorious fruit;
Sees in his soul, involved with thickest night,
An emanation of eternal light,
Ordain'd, midst sinking worlds, his dust to fire,
And shine for ever when the stars expire.
Is he not *Man*, though knowledge never shed
Her quickening beams on his neglected head?
Is he not *Man*, though sweet religion's voice
Ne'er bade the mourner in his God rejoice?

Is *he* not man, by sin and suffering tried?
Is *he* not man, for whom the Saviour died?
Belie the Negro's powers:—In headlong will,
Christian! *thy* brother thou shalt prove him still;
Belie his virtues; since his wrongs began,
His follies and his crimes have stampt him Man.

The Spaniard found him such:—the island-race
His foot had spurn'd from earth's insulted face;
Among the waifs and foundlings of mankind,
Abroad he look'd, a sturdier stock to find;
A spring of life, whose fountains should supply
His channels as he drank the rivers dry:
That stock he found on Afric's swarming plains,
That spring he open'd in the Negro's veins;
A spring, exhaustless as his avarice drew,
A stock that like Prometheus' vitals grew
Beneath the eternal beak his heart that tore,
Beneath the insatiate thirst that drain'd his gore.

Thus, childless as the Charibbeans died,
Afric's strong sons the ravening waste supplied;
Of hardier fibre to endure the yoke,
And self-renew'd beneath the severing stroke;
As grim oppression crush'd them to the tomb,
Their fruitful parent's miserable womb
Teem'd with fresh myriads, crowded o'er the waves,
Heirs to their toil, their sufferings, and their graves.

Freighted with curses was the bark that bore
The spoilers of the west to Guinea's shore;
Heavy with groans of anguish blew the gales
That swell'd that fatal bark's returning sails;
Old Ocean shrunk as o'er his surface flew
The human cargo and the demon crew.
—Thenceforth, unnumber'd as the waves that roll
From sun to sun, or pass from pole to pole,
Outcasts and exiles from their country torn,
In floating dungeons o'er the gulph were borne:

—The valiant seized, in peril-daring fight;
The weak, surprised in nakedness and night;
Subjects by mercenary despots sold;
Victims of justice prostitute for gold;
Brothers by brothers, friends by friends betray'd;
Snared in her lover's arms the trusting maid;
The faithful wife by her false lord estranged,
For one wild cup of drunken bliss exchanged;
From the brute-mother's knee, the infant-boy,
Kidnapp'd in slumber, barter'd for a toy;
The father resting at *his* father's tree,
Doom'd by the son to die beyond the sea:
—All bonds of kindred, law, alliance broke,
All ranks, all nations crouching to the yoke;
From fields of light, unshadowed climes that lie
Panting beneath the sun's meridian eye,
From hidden Ethiopia's utmost land;
From Zaara's fickle wilderness of sand;
From Congo's blazing plains and blooming woods;
From Whidah's hills, that gush with golden floods;

Captives of tyrant power and dastard wiles,
Dispeopled Africa, and gorged the isles.
Loud and perpetual o'er the Atlantic waves,
For guilty ages, roll'd the tide of slaves;
A tide that knew no fall, no turn, no rest,
Constant as day and night from east to west;
Still widening, deepening, swelling in its course,
With boundless ruin and resistless force.

Quickly by Spain's alluring fortune fired,
With hopes of fame, and dreams of wealth inspired,
Europe's dread powers, from ignominious ease
Started; their pennons stream'd on every breeze:
And still where'er the wide discoveries spread,
The cane was planted and the native bled;
While, nursed by fiercer suns, of nobler race,
The negro toil'd and perish'd in his place.

First, Lusitania,—she whose prows had borne
Her arms triumphant round the car of morn,

—Turn'd to the setting sun her bright array,
And hung her trophies o'er the couch of day.

Holland,—whose hardy sons roll'd back the sea,
To build the halcyon-nest of liberty,
—Shameless abroad the enslaving flag unfurl'd,
And reign'd a despot in the younger world.

Denmark,—whose roving hordes, in barbarous times,
Fill'd the wide north with piracy and crimes,
Awed every shore, and taught their keels to sweep
O'er every sea, the Arabs of the deep,
—Embark'd, once more to western conquest led
By Rollo's spirit, risen from the dead.

Gallia,—who vainly aim'd, in depth of night,
To hurl old Rome from her Tarpeian height,
(But lately laid, with unprevented blow,
The thrones of kings, the hopes of freedom low,)

—Rush'd o'er the theatre of splendid toils,
To brave the dangers and divide the spoils.

Britannia,—she who scathed the crest of Spain,
And won the trident sceptre of the main,
When to the raging wind and ravening tide
She gave the huge Armada's scatter'd pride,
Smit by the thunder-wielding hand that hurl'd
Her vengeance round the wave-encircled world;
—Britannia shared the glory and the guilt,
By her were Slavery's island-altars built,
And fed with human victims;—while the cries
Of blood, demanding vengeance from the skies,
Assail'd her traders' grovelling hearts in vain,
—Hearts dead to sympathy, alive to gain,
Hard from impunity, with avarice cold,
Sordid as earth, insensible as gold.

Thus through a night of ages, in whose shade
The sons of darkness plied the infernal trade,

Wild Africa beheld her tribes, at home,
In battle slain; abroad, condemn'd to roam
O'er the salt waves, in stranger-isles to bear,
(Forlorn of hope, and sold into despair,)
Through life's slow journey, to its dolorous close,
Unseen, unwept, unutterable woes.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

THE

WEST INDIES.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.

The Love of Country, and of Home, the same in all Ages and among all Nations.—The Negro's Home and Country.—Mungo Parke.—Progress of the Slave Trade.—The Middle Passage.—The Negro in the West Indies.—The Guinea Captain.—The Creole Planter.—The Moors of Barbary.—Buccaneers.—Maroons.—St Domingo.—Hurricanes.—The Yellow Fever.

THERE is a land, of every land the pride,
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside;
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons emparadise the night;

A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
Time-tutored age, and love-exalted youth:
The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air;
In every clime the magnet of his soul,
Touch'd by remembrance, trembles to that pole;
For in this land of heaven's peculiar grace,
The heritage of nature's noblest race,
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,
While in his soften'd looks benignly blend
The sire, the son, the husband, father, friend:
Here woman reigns; the mother, daughter, wife,
Strews with fresh flowers the narrow way of life;
In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
An angel-guard of loves and graces lie;

Around her knees domestic duties meet,
And fire-side pleasures gambol at her feet.
" Where shall that *land*, that *spot of earth* be found ?"
Art thou a man ?—a patriot ?—look around ;
O, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land *thy* country, and that spot *thy* home !

On Greenland's rocks, o'er grim Kamschatka's plains,
In pale Siberia's desolate domains ;
When the wild hunter takes his lonely way,
Tracks through tempestuous snows his savage prey,
The rein-deer's spoil, the ermine's treasure shares,
And feasts his famine on the fat of bears ;
Or, wrestling with the might of raging seas,
Where round the pole the eternal billows freeze,
Plucks from their jaws the stricken whale, in vain
Plunging down head-long through the whirling main ;
—His wastes of ice are lovelier in his eye
Than all the flowery vales beneath the sky,

And dearer far than Cæsar's palace-dome,
His cavern-shelter, and his cottage-home.

O'er China's garden-fields and peopled floods;
In California's pathless world of woods;
Round Andes' heights, where Winter, from his throne,
Looks down in scorn upon the summer zone;
By the gay borders of Bermuda's isles,
Where Spring with everlasting verdure smiles;
On pure Madeira's vine-robed hills of health;
In Java's swamps of pestilence and wealth;
Where Babel stood, where wolves and jackals drink,
Midst weeping willows, on Euphrates' brink;
On Carmel's crest; by Jordan's reverend stream,
Where Canaan's glories vanish'd like a dream;
Where Greece, a spectre, haunts her heroes' graves,
And Rome's vast ruins darken Tiber's waves;
Where broken-hearted Switzerland bewails
Her subject mountains and dishonour'd vales;

Where Albion's rocks exult amidst the sea,
Around the beauteous isle of Liberty;
—Man, through all ages of revolving time,
Unchanging man, in every varying clime,
Deems his own land of every land the pride,
Beloved by heav'n o'er all the world beside;
His home the spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

And is the Negro outlaw'd from his birth?
Is he alone a stranger on the earth?
Is there no shed, whose peeping roof appears
So lovely that it fills his eyes with tears?
No land, whose name, in exile heard, will dart
Ice through his veins and lightning through his heart?
Ah! yes; beneath the beams of brighter skies,
His home amidst his father's country lies;
There with the partner of his soul he shares
Love-mingled pleasures, love-divided cares;

There, as with nature's warmest filial fire,
He sooths his blind, and feeds his helpless sire;
His children sporting round his hut behold
How they shall cherish him when he is old,
Train'd by example from their tenderest youth
To deeds of charity and words of truth.'
—Is *he* not blest? Behold, at closing day,
The negro-village swarms abroad to play;
He treads the dance through all its rapturous rounds,
To the wild music of barbarian sounds;
Or, stretch'd at ease, where broad palmettos shower
Delicious coolness in his shadowy bower,
He feasts on tales of witchcraft, that gave birth
To breathless wonder, or ecstatic mirth;
Yet most delighted when in rudest rhymes,
The minstrel wakes the song of elder times,
When men were heroes, slaves to Beauty's charms,
And all the joys of life were love and arms.
—Is not the Negro blest? His generous soil
With harvest-plenty crowns his simple toil;

More than his wants his flocks and fields afford ;
He loves to greet the stranger at his board :
' The winds were roaring and the White Man fled ;
' The rains of night descended on his head ;
' The poor White Man sat down beneath our tree,
' Weary and faint, and far from home was he :
' For him no mother fills with milk the bowl,
' No wife prepares the bread to cheer his soul :
' —Pity the poor White Man, who sought our tree,
' No wife, no mother, and no home has he.'
Thus sung the Negro's daughters ;—once again,
O, that the poor White Man might hear that strain !
—Whether the victim of the treacherous Moor ;
Or from the Negro's hospitable door
Spurn'd, as a spy, from Europe's hateful clime,
And left to perish for thy country's crime ;
Or destin'd still, when all thy wanderings cease,
On Albion's lovely lap to rest in peace ;
Pilgrim ! in heaven or earth, where'er thou be,
Angels of mercy guide and comfort thee !

Thus lived the Negro in his native land,
Till Christian cruisers anchor'd on his strand;
Where'er their grasping arms the spoilers spread,
The Negro's joys, the Negro's virtues fled;
Till, far amidst the wilderness unknown,
They flourish'd in the sight of Heaven alone:
While from the coast, with wide and wider sweep,
The race of Mammon dragg'd across the deep
Their sable victims, to that western bourn,
From which no traveller might e'er return,
To blazon in the ears of future slaves
The secrets of the world beyond the waves.

When the loud trumpet of eternal doom
Shall break the mortal bondage of the tomb;
When with the mother's pangs the expiring earth
Shall bring her children forth to second birth;
Then shall the sea's mysterious caverns, spread
With human relics, render up their dead:

Though warm with life the heaving surges glow,
Where'er the winds of heaven were wont to blow,
In sevenfold phalanx shall the rallying hosts
Of ocean-slumberers join their wandering ghosts,
Along the melancholy gulph, that roars
From Guinea to the Charibbean shores.
Myriads of slaves, that perish'd on the way,
From age to age the shark's appointed prey,
By livid plagues, by lingering tortures slain,
Or headlong plunged alive into the main,[2]
Shall rise in judgment from their gloomy beds,
And call down vengeance on their murderers' heads.

Yet small the number, and the fortune blest,
Of those who on the stormy deep found rest,
Weigh'd with the unremember'd millions more,
That 'scaped the sea, to perish on the shore,
By the slow pangs of solitary care,
The earth-devouring anguish of despair,[3]

The broken heart, which kindness never heals,
The home-sick passion which the negro feels,
When toiling, fainting in the land of canes,
His spirit wanders to his native plains;
His little lovely dwelling there he sees,
Beneath the shade of his paternal trees,
The home of comfort :—then before his eyes
The terrors of captivity arise.
—'Twas night :—his babes around him lay at rest,
Their mother slumber'd on their father's breast :
A yell of murder rang around their bed;
They woke; their cottage blazed; the victims fled;
Forth sprang the ambush'd ruffians on their prey,
They caught, they bound, they drove them far away;
The white man bought them at the mart of blood;
In pestilential barks they cross'd the flood;
Then were the wretched ones asunder torn,
To distant isles, to separate bondage borne,
Denied, though sought with tears, the sad relief
That misery loves,—the fellowship of grief.

The negro, spoiled of all that nature gave,
The freeborn man, thus shrunk into a slave,
His passive limbs to measured tasks confined,
Obey'd the impulse of another mind;
A silent, secret, terrible controul,
That ruled his sinews, and repress'd his soul.
Not for himself he waked at morning-light,
Toil'd the long day, and sought repose at night;
His rest, his labour, pastime, strength, and health,
Were only portions of a master's wealth;
His love—O, name not love, where Britons doom
The fruit of love to slavery from the womb.

Thus spurn'd, degraded, trampled, and oppress'd,
The negro-exile languish'd in the west,
With nothing left of life but hated breath,
And not a hope except the hope in death,
To fly for ever from the Creole-strand,
And dwell a freeman in his fathers' land.

Lives there a savage ruder than the slave?
—Cruel as death, insatiate as the grave,
False as the winds that round his vessel blow,
Remorseless as the gulph that yawns below,
Is he who toils upon the wafting flood,
A Christian broker in the trade of blood;
Boisterous in speech, in action prompt and bold,
He buys, he sells,—he steals, he kills, for gold.
At noon, when sky and ocean, calm and clear,
Bend round his bark, one blue unbroken sphere;
When dancing dolphins sparkle through the brine,
And sun-beam circles o'er the waters shine;
He sees no beauty in the heaven serene,
No soul-enchanting sweetness in the scene,
But darkly scowling at the glorious day,
Curses the winds that loiter on their way.
When swoln with hurricanes the billows rise,
To meet the lightning midway from the skies;
When from the unburthen'd hold his shrieking slaves
Are cast, at midnight, to the hungry waves;

Not for his victims strangled in the deeps,
Not for his crimes the harden'd pirate weeps,
But grimly smiling, when the storm is o'er,
Counts his sure gains, and hurries back for more.[4]

Lives there a reptile baser than the slave? [5]
—Loathsome as death, corrupted as the grave,
See the dull Creole, at his pompous board,
Attendant vassals cringing round their lord;
Satiate with food, his heavy eyelids close,
Voluptuous minions fan him to repose;
Prone on the noonday couch he lolls in vain,
Delirious slumbers rock his maudlin brain;
He starts in horror from bewildering dreams,
His bloodshot eye with fire and frenzy gleams;
He stalks abroad; through all his wonted rounds,
The negro trembles, and the lash resounds,
And cries of anguish, shrilling through the air,
To distant fields his dread approach declare.

Mark, as he passes, every head declined;
Then slowly raised,—to curse him from behind.
This is the veriest wretch on nature's face,
Own'd by no country, spurn'd by every race;
The tether'd tyrant of one narrow span,
The bloated vampire of a living man;
His frame,—a fungus form, of dunghill birth,
That taints the air, and rots above the earth;
His soul;—has *he* a soul, whose sensual breast
Of selfish passions is a serpent's nest?
Who follows headlong, ignorant, and blind,
The vague brute-instinct of an idiot mind;
Whose heart, midst scenes of suffering senseless grown,
E'en in his mother's lap was chill'd to stone;
Whose torpid pulse no social feelings move;
A stranger to the tenderness of love,
His motley haram charms his gloating eye,
Where ebon, brown, and olive beauties vie;

His children, sprung alike from sloth and vice,
Are born his slaves, and loved at market price:
Has *he* a soul?—With his departing breath,
A form shall hail him at the gates of death,
The spectre Conscience,—shrieking through the gloom,
'Man, we shall meet again beyond the tomb.'

O Africa! amidst thy children's woes,
Did earth and heaven conspire to aid thy foes?
No, thou hadst vengeance—From thy northern shores
Sallied the lawless corsairs of the Moors,
And back on Europe's guilty nations hurl'd
Thy wrongs and sufferings in the sister world:
Deep in thy dungeons Christians clank'd their chains,
Or toil'd and perish'd on thy parching plains.

But where thine offspring crouch'd beneath the yoke,
In heavier peals the avenging thunder broke.

—Leagued with rapacious rovers of the main,
Hayti's barbarian hunters harass'd Spain ;[6]
A mammoth race, invincible in might,
Rapine and massacre their grim delight,
Peril their element ;—o'er land and flood
Thy carried fire, and quench'd the flames with blood ;
Despairing captives hail'd them from the coasts ;
They rush'd to conquest, led by Charib ghosts.

Tremble, Britannia ! while thine islands tell
The appalling mysteries of Obi's spell ;[7]
The wild Maroons, impregnable and free,
Among the mountain holds of liberty,
Sudden as lightning darted on their foe,
Seen like the flash, remember'd like the blow.

When Gallia boasts of dread Marengo's fight,
And Hohenlinden's slaughter-deluged night,
Her spirit sinks ;—the sinews of the brave,
That crippled Europe, shrunk before the Slave ;

The Demon-spectres of Domingo rise,
And all her triumphs vanish from her eyes.

God is a spirit, veil'd from human sight,
In secret darkness of eternal light;
Through all the glory of his works we trace
The hidings of his counsel and his face;
Nature, and time, and change, and fate fulfil,
Unknown, unknowing, his mysterious will;
Mercies and judgments mark him, every hour,
Supreme in grace, and infinite in power:—
Oft o'er the Eden-islands of the West,
In floral pomp, and verdant beauty drest,
Roll the dark clouds of his awaken'd ire;
—Thunder and earthquake, whirlwind, flood, and fire,
Midst reeling mountains and disparting plains,
Tell the pale world,—'The God of vengeance reigns.'

Nor in the majesty of storms alone,[8]
The eternal makes his fierce displeasure known;

At his command the pestilence abhorr'd
Spares the poor slave, and smites the haughty lord;
While to the tomb he sees his friend consign'd,
Foreboding melancholy sinks his mind,
Soon at his heart he feels the monster's fangs,
They tear his vitals with convulsive pangs;
The light is anguish to his eye, the air
Sepulchral vapours laden with despair;
Now frenzy-horrors rack his whirling brain,
Tremendous pulses throb through every vein;
The firm earth shrinks beneath his torture-bed,
The sky in ruins rushes o'er his head;
He rolls, he rages in consuming fires,
Till nature spent, with agony expires.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

THE

WEST INDIES.

PART IV.

ARGUMENT.

The Moravian Brethren.—Their Missions in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies.—Christian Negroes—The Advocates of the Negroes in England.—Granville Sharpe,—Clarkson,—Wilberforce,—Pitt,—Fox,—The Nation itself.—The Abolition of the Slave Trade.—The future State of the West Indies,—of Africa,—of the whole World.—The Millennium.

WAS there no Mercy, mother of the slave!
No friendly hand to succour and to save,
While Commerce thus thy captive tribes oppress'd,
And lowering Vengeance linger'd o'er the west?

Yes, Africa! beneath the stranger's rod
They found the freedom of the sons of God.

When Europe languish'd in barbarian gloom,
Beneath the ghostly tyranny of Rome,
Whose second empire, cowl'd and mitred, burst
A phœnix from the ashes of the first;
From Persecution's piles, by bigots fired,
Among Bohemian mountains Truth retired;
There, 'midst rude rocks, in lonely glens obscure,
She found a people scatter'd, scorn'd, and poor,
A little flock through quiet valleys led,
A Christian Israel in the desert fed,
While ravening wolves, that scorn'd the shepherd's hand,
Laid waste God's heritage through every land.
With these the lovely Exile sojourn'd long;
Sooth'd by her presence, solaced by her song,
They toil'd through danger, trials, and distress,
A band of Virgins in the wilderness,

With burning lamps, amid their secret bowers,
Counting the watches of the weary hours,
In patient hope the Bridegroom's voice to hear,
And see his banner in the clouds appear:
But when the morn returning chased the night,
These stars, that shone in darkness, sunk in light:
Luther, like Phosphor, led the conquering day,
His meek forerunners waned, and pass'd away.[t]

Ages roll'd by, the turf perennial bloom'd
O'er the lorn relics of those saints entomb'd;
No miracle proclaim'd their power divine,
No kings adorn'd, no pilgrims kiss'd their shrine;
Cold and forgotten in the grave they slept;
But God remember'd them:—their Father kept
A faithful remnant;—o'er their native clime
His Spirit moved in his appointed time,
The race revived at his almighty breath,
A seed to serve him, from the dust of death.

'Go forth, my sons, through heathen realms pro-
'claim
'Mercy to sinners in a Saviour's name:'
Thus spake the Lord; they heard, and they obey'd;
—Greenland lay wrapt in nature's heaviest shade;
Thither the ensign of the cross they bore;
The gaunt barbariars met them on the shore;
With joy and wonder hailing from afar,
Through polar storms, the light of Jacob's star.

Where roll Ohio's streams, Missouri's floods,
Beneath the umbrage of eternal woods,
The Red Man roam'd, a hunter-warrior wild;
On him the everlasting Gospel smiled;
His heart was awed, confounded, pierced, subdued,
Divinely melted, moulded, and renew'd;
The bold base Savage, nature's harshest clod,
Rose from the dust the image of his God.

And thou, poor Negro! scorn'd of all mankind;
Thou dumb and impotent, and deaf and blind;
Thou dead in spirit! toil-degraded slave,
Crush'd by the curse on Adam to the grave!
The messengers of peace, o'er land and sea,
That sought the sons of sorrow, stoop'd to thee.
—The captive raised his slow and sullen eye;
He knew no friend, nor deem'd a friend was nigh,
Till the sweet tones of Pity touch'd his ears,
And mercy bathed his bosom with her tears;
Strange were those tones, to him those tears were strange,
He wept and wonder'd at the mighty change,
Felt the quick pang of keen compunction dart,
And heard a small still whisper in his heart,
A voice from heaven, that bade the outcast rise
From shame on earth to glory in the skies.

From isle to isle the welcome tidings ran;
The slave that heard them started into man:

Like Peter, sleeping in his chains, he lay,
The angel came, his night was turn'd to day;
'Arise!' his fetters fall, his slumbers flee;
He wakes to life, he springs to liberty.

No more to Demon-Gods, in hideous forms,
He pray'd for earthquakes, pestilence, and storms,
In secret agony devour'd the earth,
And, while he spared his mother, cursed his birth:[2]
To heaven the Christian Negro sent his sighs,
In morning vows and evening sacrifice;
He pray'd for blessings to descend on those
That dealt to him the cup of many woes;
Thought of his home in Africa forlorn;
Yet, while he wept, rejoiced that he was born.
No longer burning with unholy fires,
He wallow'd in the dust of base desires;
Ennobling virtue fix'd his hopes above,
Enlarged his heart, and sanctified his love:

With humble steps the paths of peace he trod,
A happy pilgrim, for he walk'd with God.

Still slowly spread the dawn of life and day,
In death and darkness pagan myriads lay:
Stronger and heavier chains than those that bind
The captive's limbs, enthrall'd his abject mind;
The yoke of man his neck indignant bore,
The yoke of sin his willing spirit wore.

Meanwhile, among the great, the brave, the free,
The matchless race of Albion and the sea,
Champions arose to plead the Negro's cause;
In the wide breach of violated laws,
Through which the torrent of injustice roll'd,
They stood:—with zeal unconquerably bold,
They raised their voices, stretch'd their arms to save
From chains the freeman, from despair the slave;
The exile's heart-sick anguish to assuage,
And rescue Afric from the spoiler's rage.

She, miserable mother, from the shore,
Age after age, beheld the barks that bore
Her tribes to bondage :—with distraction wrung,
Wild as the lioness that seeks her young,
She flash'd unheeded lightnings from her eyes ;
Her inmost deserts echoing to her cries ;
Till agony the sense of suffering stole,
And stern unconscious grief benumb'd her soul.
So Niobe, when all her race were slain,
In ecstasy of woe forgot her pain ;
Cold in her eye serenest horror shone,
While pitying Nature sooth'd her into stone.

Thus Africa, entranced with sorrow, stood,
Her fix'd eye gleaming on the restless flood :
—When Sharpe, on proud Britannia's charter'd shore,
From Lybian limbs the unsanction'd fetters tore,
And taught the world, that while she rules the waves,
Her soil is freedom to the feet of slaves :[1]

—When Clarkson his victorious course began,[4]
Unyielding in the cause of God and man,
Wise, patient, persevering to the end,
No guile could thwart, no power his purpose bend,
He rose o'er Afric like the sun in smiles,
He rests in glory on the western isles:
—When Wilberforce, the minister of grace,
The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race,[5]
With angel-might opposed the rage of hell,
And fought like Michael, till the dragon fell:
—When Pitt, supreme, amid the senate, rose
The Negro's friend, among the Negro's foes;
Yet while his tones like heaven's high thunder broke,
No fire descended to consume the yoke:
—When Fox, all-eloquent for freedom stood,
With speech resistless as the voice of blood,
The voice that cries through all the Patriot's veins,
When at his feet his country groans in chains;
The voice that whispers in the mother's breast,
When smiles her infant in his rosy rest;

Of power to bid the storm of passion roll,
Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul.
He spake in vain;—till, with his latest breath,
He broke the spell of Africa in death.

The Muse to whom the lyre and lute belong,
Whose song of freedom is her noblest song,
The lyre with awful indignation swept,
O'er the sweet lute in silent sorrow wept,
—When Albion's crimes drew thunder from her tongue,
—When Afric's woes o'erwhelm'd her while she sung.
Lamented Cowper! in thy path I tread;
O! that on me were thy meek spirit shed!
The woes that wring my bosom once were thine;
Be all thy virtues, all thy genius mine!
Peace to thy soul! thy God thy portion be;
And in his presence may I rest with thee!

Quick at the call of Virtue, Freedom, Truth,
Weak withering age and strong aspiring youth
Alike the expanding power of pity felt;
The coldest, hardest hearts began to melt;
From breast to breast the flame of justice glow'd;
Wide o'er its banks the Nile of mercy flow'd;
Through all the isle the gradual waters swell'd;
Mammon in vain the encircling flood repell'd;
O'erthrown at length, like Pharoah and his host,
His shipwreck'd hopes lay scatter'd round the coast.

High on her rock in solitary state,
Sublimely musing, pale Britannia sate:
Her awful forehead on her spear reclined,
Her robe and tresses streaming with the wind;
Chill through her frame foreboding tremors crept;
The Mother thought upon her Sons, and wept:
—She thought of Nelson in the battle slain,
And his last signal beaming o'er the main;[6]

In Glory's circling arms the hero bled,
While Victory bound the laurel on his head:
At once immortal, in both worlds, became
His soaring spirit and abiding name:
—She thought of Pitt, heart-broken, on his bier;
And 'O, my Country!' echoed in her ear;
—She thought of Fox;—she heard him faintly speak,
His parting breath grew cold upon her cheek,
His dying accents trembled into air;
'Spare injured Africa! the Negro spare!'

She started from her trance!—and round the shore,
Beheld her supplicating sons once more
Pleading the suit so long, so vainly tried,
Renew'd, resisted, promised, pledged, denied,
The Negro's claim to all his Maker gave,
And all the tyrant ravish'd from the slave.
Her yielding heart confess'd the righteous claim,
Sorrow had soften'd it, and love o'ercame;

Shame flush'd her noble cheek, her bosom burn'd;
To helpless, hopeless Africa she turn'd;
She saw her sister in the Mourner's face,
And rush'd with tears into her dark embrace:
'All hail!' exclaim'd the Empress of the sea,
'Thy chains are broken, Africa be free!'

Muse! take the harp of prophecy:—behold!
The glories of a brighter age unfold:
Friends of the outcast! view the accomplish'd plan,
The Negro towering to the height of man.
The blood of Romans, Saxons, Gauls, and Danes,
Swell'd the rich fountain of the Briton's veins;
Unmingled streams a warmer life impart,
And quicker pulses to the Negro's heart:
A dusky race beneath the evening sun,
Shall blend their spousal currents into one:
Is beauty bound to colour, shape, or air?
No; God created all his offspring fair.

Tyrant and slave their tribes shall never see,
For God created all his offspring free;
Then Justice, leagued with Mercy, from above,
Shall reign in all the liberty of love;
And the sweet shores beneath the balmy west,
Again shall be 'the islands of the blest.'

Unutterable mysteries of fate
Involve, O, Africa! thy future state.
—On Niger's banks, in lonely beauty wild,
A Negro-mother carols to her child:
'Son of my widow'd love, my orphan joy!
'Avenge thy father's murder, O, my boy!'
Along those banks the fearless *infant* strays,
Bathes in the stream, among the eddies plays;
See the *boy* bounding through the eager race;
The fierce *youth*, shouting foremost in the chace,
Drives the grim lion from his ancient woods,
And smites the crocodile amidst his floods.

To giant strength in unshorn *manhood* grown,
He haunts the wilderness, he dwells alone.
A tigress with her whelps to seize him sprung,
He tears the mother, and he tames the young
In the drear cavern of their native rock;
Thither wild slaves and fell banditti flock;
He heads their hordes; they burst, like torrid rains,
In death and devastation o'er the plains;
Stronger and bolder grows his ruffian band,
Prouder his heart, more terrible his hand.
He spreads his banner; crowding from afar,
Innumerable armies rush to war;
Resistless as the pillar'd whirlwinds fly
O'er Lybian sands, revolving to the sky,
In fire and wrath through every realm they run,
Where the noon-shadow shrinks beneath the sun;
Till at the Conqueror's feet from sea to sea,
A hundred nations bow the servile knee,
And throned in nature's unreveal'd domains,
The Jenghis Khan of Africa he reigns.

Dim through the night of these tempestuous years
A Sabbath dawn o'er Africa appears;
Then shall her neck from Europe's yoke be freed,
And healing arts to hideous arms succeed;
At home fraternal bonds her tribes shall bind,
Commerce abroad espouse them with mankind,
While truth shall build, and pure Religion bless
The church of God amidst the wilderness.

Nor in the isles and Africa alone
Be the Redeemer's cross and triumph known:
Father of Mercies! speed the promised hour;
Thy kingdom come with all-restoring power;
Peace, virtue, knowledge, spread from pole to pole,
As round the world the ocean waters roll!
—Hope waits the morning of celestial light;
Time plumes his wings for everlasting flight;
Unchanging seasons have their march begun;
Millenial years are hastening to the sun;

Seen through thick clouds, by Faith's transpiercing
eyes,
The New Creation shines in purer skies.
—All hail!—the age of crime and suffering ends;
The reign of righteousness from heaven descends;
Vengeance for ever sheathes the afflicting sword;
Death is destroy'd, and Paradise restored;
Man, rising from the ruins of his fall,
Is one with God, and God is All in All.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST PART.

NOTES.

PART I.

Note [1]. Page 1, line 6.—*far as Niger rolls his eastern tide.*—Mungo Parke, in his travels, ascertained that "the great river of the Negroes" flows *eastward.* It is probable, therefore, that this river is either lost among the sands, or empties itself into some inland sea, in the undiscovered regions of Africa.—*See also Part II., line* 64.

Note [2]. Page 8, line 6.—*Denied to ages, but betroth'd to me.*—When the Author of *The West Indies* conceived the plan of this introduction of Columbus, he was not aware that he was indebted to any preceding poet for a hint on the subject; but, some time afterwards, on a second perusal of SOUTHEY's MADOC, it struck him that the idea of Columbus walking on the shore at sunset, which he had hitherto imagined his own, might be only a reflection of the impression made upon his mind long before, by the first reading of the following splendid passage. He therefore gladly makes this acknowledgment,

though at his own expence, in justice to the Author of the noblest narrative Poem in the English language, after the FAERIE QUEENE, and PARADISE LOST.

' When evening came, toward the echoing shore,
' I and Cadwallon walk'd together forth;
' Bright with dilated glory shone the west;
' But brighter lay the ocean flood below,
' The burnish'd silver sea, that heav'd and flash'd
' Its restless rays intolerably bright.
" Prince!" quoth Cadwallon, " thou hast rode the waves
" In triumph when the Invader felt thine arm.
" O, what a nobler conquest might be won
" There,—upon that wide field!"—" What meanest thou?"
' I cried;—" That yonder waters are not spread
" A boundless waste, a bourne impassable;
" That thou shouldst rule the elements,—that there
" Might manly courage, manly wisdom find
" Some happy isle, some undiscover'd shore,
" Some resting place for peace. Oh! that my soul
" Could seize the wings of morning! soon would I
" Behold that other world, where yonder sun
" Now speeds to dawn in glory."

PART II.

Note [1]. Page 18, line 1.—*An eastern plant ingrafted on the soil.*—The Cane is said to have been first transplanted from Madeira to the Brazils, by the Portuguese, and afterwards introduced by the Spaniards into the Charibbee Islands.—*See also line* 21, *below.*

PART III.

Note [1]. Page 36, line 6.—*To deeds of charity and words of truth.*—Dr Winterbotham says, 'The respect which 'the Africans pay to *old people* is very great.—One of the 'severest insults which can be offered to an African is 'to speak disrespectfully of his mother.'—'The negro 'race is perhaps the most prolific of all the human spe-'cies. Their infancy and youth are singularly happy.—'The mothers are passionately fond of their children.'—*Goldbury's Travels.*—"Strike me," said my attendant, "but do not curse my mother."—'The same sentiment 'I found universally to prevail.—One of the first lessons 'in which the Mandingo women instruct their children 'is the *practice of truth.*—It was the only consolation

'for a negro mother whose son had been murdered by 'the Moors, that *the poor boy had never told a lie.*'—*Parke's Travels.* The description of African life and manners that follows, and the song of the Negro's daughters, are copied without exaggeration from the authentic acounts of Mungo Parke.

Note ˙. Page 39, line 10.—*Or headlong plunged alive into the main.*—On this subject the following instance of almost incredible cruelty was substantiated in a court of justice.

'In this year (1783), certain underwriters desired to be 'heard against Gregson and others of Liverpool, in the 'case of the ship Zong, Captain Collingwood, alledging 'that the captain and officers of the said vessel threw over-'board one hundred and thirty-two slaves alive into the 'sea, in order to defraud them, by claiming the value of 'the said slaves, as if they had been lost in a natural way. 'In the course of the trial, which afterwards came on, it 'appeared that the slaves on board the Zong were very 'sickly; that sixty of them had already died; and seve-'ral were ill, and likely to die, when the captain propo-'sed to James Kelsal, the mate, and others, to throw se-'veral of them overboard, stating "that if they died a "natural death, the loss would fall upon the owners of "the ship, but that, if they were thrown into the sea, it "would fall upon the underwriters." He selected, ac-'cordingly, one hundred and thirty-two of the most sick-'ly of the slaves. Fifty-four of these were immediately

'thrown overboard, and forty-two were made to be par-
'takers of their fate on the succeeding day. In the
'course of three days afterwards the remaining twenty-
'six were brought upon deck, to complete the number of
'victims. The first sixteen submitted to be thrown into
'the sea, but the rest, with a noble resolution, would not
'suffer the officers to touch them, but leaped after their
'companions, and shared their fate.

'The plea which was set up in behalf of this atrocious
'and unparalleled act of wickedness was, that the cap-
'tain discovered, when he made the proposal, that he had
'only two hundred gallons of water on board, and that
'he had missed his port. It was proved, however, in an-
'swer to this, that no one had been put upon short al-
'lowance; and that, as if Providence had determined to
'afford an unequivocal proof of the guilt, a shower of
'rain fell, and continued for three days, immediately af-
'ter the second lot of slaves had been destroyed, by
'means of which they might have filled many of their
'vessels * with water, and thus have prevented all ne-
'cessity for the destruction of the third.

'Mr Sharpe was present at this trial, and procured the
'attendance of a short-hand writer to take down the
'facts which should come out in the course of it. These

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* It appeared that they filled six.

'he gave to the public afterwards. He communicated 'them also, with a copy of the trial, to the Lords of the 'Admiralty, as the guardians of justice upon the seas, 'and to the Duke of Portland, as principal minister 'of state. No notice, however, was taken by any of 'these of the information which had been thus sent 'them.'—*Clarkson's History of the Abolition*, &c., page 95—7.

Note [3]. Page 39. line 18.—*The earth-devouring anguish of despair.*—The negroes sometimes, in deep and irrecoverable melancholy, waste themselves away, by secretly swallowing large quantities of earth. It is remarkable that 'earth-eating,' as it is called, is an *infectious*, and even a *social* malady: plantations have been occasionally almost depopulated, by the slaves, with one consent, betaking themselves to this strange practice, which speedily brings them to a miserable and premature end.

Note [4]. Page 43, line 4.—*Counts his sure gains, and hurries back for more.*—See Note [2] of this Part.

Note [5]. Ibid., line 5.—*Lives there a reptile baser than the slave?* &c.—The character of the Creole Planter here drawn is justified both by reason and fact: it is no monster of imagination, though, for the credit of human nature, we may hope that it is a monster as rare as it is shocking. It is the double curse of slavery to degrade all who are concerned with it, *doing or suffering*. The slave himself is the lowest in the scale of human beings, —except the slave-dealer. Dr Pinkard's *Notes on the*

West Indies, and Captain Stedman's *Account of Surinam*, afford examples of the cruelty, ignorance, sloth, and sensuality of Creole planters, particularly in Dutch Guiana, which fully equal the epitome of vice and abomination exhibited in these lines.

Note [6]. Page 46, lines 1, 2.

Leagued with rapacious rovers of the main,
Hayti's barbarian hunters harass'd Spain.

Alluding to the freebooters and buccaneers who infested the Charibbean seas during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and were equally renowned for their valour and brutality.

Note [7]. Ibid., line 10.—*The appalling mysteries of Obi's spell.*—See Dallas's *History of the Maroons*, among the mountains of Jamaica; also, Dr Moseley's *Treatise on Sugar.*

Note [8]. Page 47, line 17.—*Nor in the majesty of storms alone*, &c.—For minute and afflicting details of the origin and progress of the yellow fever in an individual subject, see Dr Pinkard's *Notes on the West Indies*, Vol. III., particularly Letter XII., in which the writer, from experience, describes its horrors and sufferings.

PART IV.

Note [1]. Page 51, line 8.—*His meek forerunners waned, and pass'd away*, &c.—The context preceding and following this line alludes to the old Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, who flourished long before the reformation, but afterwards were almost lost among the protestants, till the beginning of the eighteenth century, when their ancient episcopal church was revived in Lusatia, by some refugees from Moravia.—See Crantz's *Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*. Histories of the missions of the Brethren in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies, have been published in Germany: those of the two former have been translated into English.—See Crantz's *History of Greenland*, and Loskiel's *History of the Brethren among the Indians in North America*. It is only justice here to observe, that Christians of other denominations have exerted themselves with great success in the conversion of the negroes. No invidious preference is intended to be given to the Moravians; but, knowing them best, the author particularized this society.

Note [2]. Page 54, lines 7, 8.

In secret agony devour'd the earth,
And while he spared his mother, cursed his birth.

See Notes [2] and [3] Part III.

Note [3]. Page 56, line 15.—*When Sharpe on proud Britannia's charter'd shore*, &c.—Granville Sharpe, Esq. after a struggle of many years, against authority and precedent, established in our courts of justice the *law of the Constitution*, that there *are* no slaves in England, and that the fact of a negro being found in this country is of itself a proof that he is a freeman.

Note [4]. Page 57, line 1.—*When Clarkson his victorious course began.*—No panegyric which a conscientious writer can bestow, or a good man may receive, will be deemed extravagant for the modest merits of Mr Clarkson, by those who are acquainted with his labours.—*See his History of the Abolition*, &c., two volumes, lately published.

Note [5]. Ibid., line 8.—*The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race.*—The author of this poem confesses himself under many obligations to Mr Wilberforce's eloquent letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, addressed to the Freeholders of Yorkshire, and published in 1807, previous to the decision of the question. Las Casas has been accused of being *a promoter*, if not *the original projector*, of the Negro Slave Trade to the West Indies. The Abbé Gregoire some years ago published a defence of this great and good man against the degrading imputation. The following, among other arguments which he advances, are well worthy of consideration.

The Slave Trade between Africa and the West Indies commenced, according to Herrera himself, the first and

indeed the only accuser of Las Casas, nineteen years before the epoch of his pretended project.

Herrera (from whom other authors have negligently taken the fact for granted, on his bare word) does not quote a single authority in support of his assertion, that Las Casas recommended the importation of negroes into Hispaniola. The charge itself was *first* published thirty-five years after the death of Las Casas. All writers antecedent to Herrera, and contemporary with him, are silent on the subject, although several of these were the avowed enemies of Las Casas. Herrera's veracity on other points is much disputed, and he displays violent prejudices against the man whom he accuses. It may be added, that he was greatly indebted to him for information as an historian of the Indies.

In the numerous writings of Las Casas himself, still extant, there is not one word in favour of slavery of any kind, but they abound with reasoning and invective against it in every shape; and, among his eloquent appeals and comprehensive plans on behalf of the oppressed Indians, there is not a solitary hint in recommendation of the African Slave Trade. He only twice mentions the negroes through all his multifarious writings: in one instance he merely names them as living in the islands, (in a manuscript in the National Library at Paris;) and in the same work he proposes *no other* remedy for the miseries of the aboriginal inhabitants, than the

suppression of the *repartimentos*, or divisions of the *people*, with the soil on which they were born. In another memorial, after detailing at great length the measures which ought to be pursued for the redress of the Indians, (the proper opportunity, certainly, to advocate the Negro Slave Trade, if he approved of it,) he adds,—'The Indians are not more tormented by their masters 'and the different public officers, than by their servants '*and by the negroes.*'

The original accusation of Las Casas, translated from the words of Herrera, is as follows:—'The licentiate 'Bartholomew Las Casas, perceiving that his plans ex-'perienced on all sides great difficulties, and that the ex-'pectations which he had formed from his connexion 'with the High Chancellor, and the favourable opinion 'the latter entertained of him, had not produced any 'effect, projected other expedients, such as, *to procure* '*for the Castilians established in the Indies a cargo of* '*negroes*, to relieve the Indians in the culture of the 'earth and the labour of the mines; also, to obtain *a* '*great number of working men*, (from Europe,) who 'should pass over into those regions with certain privi-'leges, and on certain conditions, which he detailed.'

Let this statement be compared with Dr Robertson's most exaggerated account, avowedly taken *from Herrera* alone, and let every man judge for himself, whether one of the most zealous and indefatigable advocates of

freedom that ever existed, ‘ while he contended earnest-
‘ ly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of
‘ the globe, *laboured* to enslave the inhabitants of ano-
‘ ther region, and, in his zeal to save the Americans from
‘ the yoke, pronounced it to be *lawful and expedient* to
‘ impose one *still heavier* on the Africans.’—Robert-
son’s *History of America*, Vol. I., Part III. But the cir-
cumstance *connected by Dr Robertson with this suppo-
sed scheme* of Las Casas is unwarranted by any autho-
rity, and makes his own of no value. He adds,—‘ the
‘ plan of Las Casas was adopted. Charles V. granted a
‘ patent to one of his Flemish favourites, containing an
‘ exclusive right of importing four thousand negroes in-
‘ to America.’ Herrera, the only author whom Dr Ro-
bertson pretends to follow, does not, in any place, as-
sociate his random charge against Las Casas with this
acknowledged and most infamous fact. The crime of
having first recommended the importation of African
slaves into the American islands is attributed, by three
writers of the life of Cardinal Ximenes, (who rendered
himself illustrious by his opposition to the trade in its
infancy,) to *Chievres*, and by two others to *the Flemish
nobility themselves*, who obtained the monopoly afore-
mentioned, and which was sold to some ‘ Genoese mer-
‘ chants for 25,000 ducats: and *they* were *the first* who
‘ brought into a regular form that commerce for slaves,
‘ between Africa and America, which has since been car-

ried on to such an amazing extent.'—It is unnecessary to say more on this subject.—A translation of Gregoire's defence of Las Casas was published in 1803, by *H. D. Symonds, Paternoster Row.*

Note [6]. Page 59, line 18.—*And his last signal bearing o'er the main.*

[6] England expects every man to do his duty.'

LYRIC PIECES,

&c.

'*O laborum*
'*Dulce lenimen, mihicumque salve*
'*Rite vocanti.*'

HORAT. *ad Lyram,*
Od. XXXII., Lib. 1.

THE

HARP OF SORROW.

I GAVE my Harp to Sorrow's hand,
And she has ruled the chords so long,
They will not speak at my command;
They warble only to *her* song.

Of dear, departed hours,
Too fondly loved to last,
The dew, the breath, the bloom of flowers,
Snapt in their freshness by the blast:—

Of long, long years of future care,
  Till lingering Nature yields her breath,
And endless ages of despair,
  Beyond the judgment-day of death :—

The weeping Minstrel sings,
  And while her numbers flow,
My spirit trembles with the strings,
  Responsive to the notes of woe.

Would gladness move a sprightlier strain,
  And wake this wild Harp's clearest tones,
The chords, impatient to complain,
  Are dumb, or only utter moans.

And yet to sooth the mind
  With luxury of grief,
The soul to suffering all resign'd
  In Sorrow's music feels relief.

Thus o'er the light Æolian lyre
The winds of dark November stray,
Touch the quick nerve of every wire,
And on its magic pulses play;—

Till all the air around,
Mysterious murmurs fill,
A strange bewildering dream of sound,
Most heavenly sweet,—yet mournful still

O! snatch the Harp from Sorrow's hand,
Hope! who hast been a stranger long;
O! strike it with sublime command,
And be the Poet's life thy song.

Of vanish'd troubles sing,
Of fears for ever fled,
Of flowers that hear the voice of Spring,
And burst and blossom from the dead;—

Of home, contentment, health, repose,
  Serene delights, while years increase;
And weary life's triumphant close
  In some calm sunset hour of peace;—

Of bliss that reigns above,
  Celestial May of Youth,
Unchanging as JEHOVAH's love,
  And everlasting as His truth:—

Sing, heavenly Hope!—and dart thine hand
  O'er my frail Harp, untuned so long;
That Harp shall breathe, at thy command
  Immortal sweetness through thy song.

Ah! then this gloom controul,
  And at thy voice shall start
A new creation in my soul,
  A native Eden in my heart.

POPE'S WILLOW.

VERSES

Written for an Urn, made out of the Trunk of the Weeping Willow, imported from the East, and planted by Pope in his Grounds at Twickenham, where it flourished many years; but, falling into decay, it was lately cut down.

ERE POPE resign'd his tuneful breath,
And made the turf his pillow,
The Minstrel hung his harp in death
Upon the drooping Willow;
That Willow from Euphrates' strand,
Had sprung beneath his training hand.

Long, as revolving seasons flew,
From youth to age it flourish'd,
By vernal winds and star-light dew,
By showers and sun-beams nourish'd;
And while in dust the Poet slept,
The Willow o'er his ashes wept.

Old Time beheld its silvery head
With graceful grandeur towering,
Its pensile boughs profusely spread,
The breezy lawn embowering,
Till, arch'd around, there seem'd to shoot
A grove of scions from one root.

Thither, at Summer noon, he view'd
The lovely Nine retreating,
Beneath its twilight solitude
With songs their Poet greeting,
Whose spirit in the Willow spoke,
Like Jove's from dark Dodona's oak.

By harvest moonlight there he spied
The fairy bands advancing;
Bright Ariel's troop, on Thames's side,
Around the willow dancing;
Gay sylphs among the foliage play'd,
And glow-worms glitter'd in the shade.

One morn, while Time thus mark'd the tree,
In beauty green and glorious,
'The hand,' he cried, 'that planted thee
'O'er mine was oft victorious;
'Be vengeance now my calm employ,—
'One work of POPE's I *will* destroy.'

He spake, and struck a silent blow
With that dread arm whose motion
Lays cedars, thrones, and temples low,
And wields o'er land and ocean
The unremitting axe of doom,
That fells the forest of the tomb.

Deep to the Willow's root it went,
And cleft the core asunder,
Like sudden secret lightning, sent
Without recording thunder:
—From that sad moment, slow away
Began the Willow to decay.

In vain did Spring those bowers restore,
Where Loves and Graces revell'd,
Autumn's wild gales the branches tore,
The thin grey leaves dishevell'd,
And every wasting Winter found
The Willow nearer to the ground.

Hoary, and weak, and bent with age,
At length the axe assail'd it:
It bow'd before the woodman's rage;
—The swans of Thames bewail'd it,
With softer tones, with sweeter breath,
Than ever charm'd the ear of death.

O Pope! hadst thou, whose lyre so long
The wondering world enchanted,
Amidst thy paradise of song
This Weeping Willow planted;
Among thy loftiest laurels seen,
In deathless verse for ever green,—

Thy chosen Tree had stood sublime,
The storms of ages braving,
Triumphant o'er the wrecks of Time,
Its verdant banner waving
While regal pyramids decay'd,
And empires perish'd in its shade.

An humbler lot, O Tree! was thine;
—Gone down in all thy glory,
The sweet, the mournful task be mine,
To sing thy simple story;
Though verse like mine in vain would raise
The fame of thy departed days.

Yet, fallen Willow! if to me
  Such power of song were given,
My lips should breathe a soul through thee,
  And call down fire from heaven,
To kindle in this hallow'd Urn
A flame that would for ever burn.

A

WALK IN SPRING.

I WANDER'D in a lonely glade,
Where, issuing from the forest shade,
A little mountain stream
Along the winding valley play'd,
Beneath the morning beam.

Light o'er the woods of dark brown oak
The west-wind wreathed the hovering smoke
From cottage roofs conceal'd,
Below a rock abruptly broke,
In rosy light reveal'd.

'Twas in the infancy of May,
The uplands glow'd in green array,
While from the ranging eye,
The lessening landscape stretch'd away,
To meet the bending sky.

'Tis sweet in solitude to hear
The earliest music of the year,
The Blackbird's loud wild note,
Or, from the wintry thicket drear,
The Thrush's stammering throat.

In rustic solitude 'tis sweet
The earliest flowers of Spring to greet,
The violet from its tomb,
The strawberry, creeping at our feet,
The sorrel's simple bloom.

Therefore I love the walks of Spring,—
While still I hear new warblers sing,
  Fresh-opening bells I see;
Joy flits on every roving wing,
  Hope buds on every tree.

That morn I look'd and listen'd long,
Some cheering sight, some woodland song,
  As yet unheard, unseen,
To welcome, with remembrance strong
  Of days that once had been;—

When gathering flowers, an eager child,
I ran abroad with rapture wild;
  Or, on more curious quest,
Peep'd breathless through the copse, and smile
  To see the linnet's nest.

Already had I watch'd the flight
Of swallows darting through the light,
And mock'd the cuckoo's call;
Already view'd, o'er meadows bright,
The evening rain-bow fall.

Now in my walk, with sweet surprise,
I saw the first Spring cowslip rise,
The plant whose pensile flowers
Bend to the earth their beauteous eyes,
In sunshine as in showers.

Lone on a mossy bank it grew,
Where lichens, purple, white, and blue,
Among the verdure crept;
Its yellow ringlets, dropping dew,
The breezes lightly swept.

A bee had nestled on its blooms,
He shook abroad their rich perfumes,
  Then fled in airy rings;
His place a butterfly assumes,
  Glancing his glorious wings.

O, welcome, as a friend! I cried;
A friend through many a season tried,
  Nor ever sought in vain,
When May, with Flora at her side,
  Is dancing on the plain.

Sure as the Pleiades adorn
The glittering coronet of morn,
  In calm delicious hours,
Beneath their beams thy buds are born,
  'Midst love-awakening showers.

Scatter'd by Nature's graceful hand,
In briary glens, o'er pasture land,
  Thy fairy tribes we meet;
Gay in the milk-maid's path they stand,
  They kiss her tripping feet.

From winter's farm-yard bondage freed,
The cattle bounding o'er the mead,
  Where green the herbage grows,
Among thy fragrant blossoms feed,
  Upon thy tufts repose.

Tossing his forelock o'er his mane,
The foal, at rest upon the plain,
  Sports with thy flexile stalk,
But stoops his little neck in vain,
  To crop it in his walk.

Where thick thy primrose blossoms play,
Lovely and innocent as they,
O'er coppice lawns and dells,
In bands the rural children stray,
To pluck thy nectar'd bells;—

Whose simple sweets, with curious skill,
The frugal cottage dames distil,
Nor envy France the vine,
While many a festal cup they fill
With Britain's homely wine.

Unchanging still from year to year,
Like stars returning in their sphere,
With undiminish'd rays,
Thy vernal constellations cheer
The dawn of lengthening days.

Perhaps from Nature's earliest May,
Imperishable 'midst decay,
  Thy self-renewing race
Have breathed their balmy lives away
  In this neglected place.

And O, till Nature's final doom,
Here unmolested may they bloom,
  From scythe and plough secure,
This bank their cradle and their tomb,
  While earth and skies endure!

Yet, lowly Cowslip, while in thee
An old unalter'd friend I see,
  Fresh in perennial prime;
From Spring to Spring behold in me
  The woes and waste of Time.

This fading eye and withering mien
Tell what a sufferer I have been,
Since more and more estranged,
From hope to hope, from scene to scene,
Through Folly's wilds I ranged.

Then fields and woods I proudly spurn'd;
From Nature's maiden love I turn'd,
And wooed the enchantress Art;
Yet while for her my fancy burn'd
Cold was my wretched heart,—

Till, distanced in Ambition's race,
Weary of Pleasure's joyless chace,
My peace untimely slain,
Sick of the world,——I turn'd my face
To fields and woods again.

'Twas Spring ;—my former haunts I found,
My favourite flowers adorn'd the ground,
My darling minstrels play'd ;
The mountains were with sunset crown'd,
The valleys dun with shade.

With lorn delight the scene I view'd,
Past joys and sorrows were renew'd ;
My infant hopes and fears
Look'd lovely, through the solitude
Of retrospective years.

And still, in Memory's twilight bowers,
The spirits of departed hours,
With mellowing tints, pourtray
The blossoms of life's vernal flowers,
For ever fall'n away.

Till youth's delirious dream is o'er,
Sanguine with hope we look before,
The future good to find;
In age, when error charms no more,
For bliss we look behind.

RANZ DES VACHES.

Quand reverrai je en un jour
Tous les objets de mon amour,
Nos clairs ruisseaux,
Nos hameaux,
Nos coteaux,
Nos montagnes,
Et l'ornement des nos montagnes
La si gentille Isabeau ?
Dans l'ombre d'un ormeau,
Quand danserai je au son du chalameau ?

Quand reverrai je en un jour

Tous les objets de mon amour ;

Mon pere,

Ma mere,

Mon frere,

Ma sœur,

Mes agneaux,

Mes troupeaux,

Ma bergere ?

THE

SWISS COWHERD'S SONG,

IN A FOREIGN LAND.

Imitated from the foregoing.

O, WHEN shall I visit the land of my birth,
The loveliest land on the face of the earth?
When shall I those scenes of affection explore,
Our forests, our fountains,
Our hamlets, our mountains,
With the pride of our mountains, the maid I adore?
O, when shall I dance on the daisy white mead,
In the shade of an elm, to the sound of the reed?

When shall I return to that lowly retreat,
Where all my fond objects of tenderness meet,—
The lambs and the heifers that follow my call,
My father, my mother,
My sister, my brother,
And dear Isabella, the joy of them all?
O, when shall I visit the land of my birth?
—'Tis the loveliest land on the face of the earth.

LA QUERCIA.

Arietta di Metastasio.

Sprezza il furor del vento
Robusta Quercia, avezza
Di cento vernie cento
L'injurie a tollerar.

E se pur cade al suolo,
Spiega per l'onde il volo,
E con quel vento istesso
Va contrastando in mar.

THE OAK.

Imitated from the foregoing.

The tall Oak, towering to the skies,
The fury of the wind defies,
From age to age, in virtue strong,
Inured to stand, and suffer wrong.

O'erwhelm'd at length upon the plain,
It puts forth wings, and sweeps the main;
The self-same foe undaunted braves,
And fights the wind upon the waves.

THE DIAL.

THIS shadow on the Dial's face,
That steals from day to day,
With slow, unseen, unceasing pace,
Moments, and months, and years away;—
This shadow, which, in every clime,
Since light and motion first began,
Hath held its course sublime;—
What is it?——Mortal Man!
It is the scythe of TIME:
—A shadow only to the eye;
Yet, in its calm career,
It levels all beneath the sky;
And still, through each succeeding year,

Right onward, with resistless power,
Its stroke shall darken every hour,
Till Nature's race be run,
And TIME's last shadow shall eclipse the sun.

Nor only o'er the Dial's face,
This silent phantom, day by day,
With slow, unseen, unceasing pace,
Steals moments, months, and years away;
From hoary rock and aged tree,
From proud Palmyra's mouldering walls,
From Teneriffe, towering o'er the sea,
From every blade of grass it falls;
For still, where'er a shadow sweeps,
The scythe of Time destroys,
And man at every footstep weeps
O'er evanescent joys;
Life's flowerets glittering with the dews of morn,
Fair for a moment, then for ever shorn:

—Ah! soon, beneath the inevitable blow,
I too shall lie in dust and darkness low.

Then Time, the Conqueror, will suspend
His scythe, a trophy, o'er my tomb,
Whose moving shadow shall portend
Each frail beholder's doom.
O'er the wide earth's illumined space,
Though Time's triumphant flight be shewn,
The truest index on its face
Points from the church-yard stone.

THE ROSES;

Addressed to a Friend, on the Birth of his first Child.

Two Roses on one slender spray,
In sweet communion grew,
Together hail'd the morning ray,
And drank the evening dew;
While sweetly wreath'd in mossy green,
There sprang a little bud between.

Through clouds and sunshine, storms and showers,
They open'd into bloom,
Mingling their foliage and their flowers,
Their beauty and perfume;

While foster'd on its rising stem,
The bud became a purple gem.

But soon their summer splendour pass'd,
They faded in the wind,
Yet were these Roses to the last,
The loveliest of their kind,
Whose crimson leaves, in falling round,
Adorn'd and sanctified the ground.

When thus were all their honours shorn,
The bud unfolding rose,
And blush'd and brighten'd, as the morn
From dawn to sunrise glows,
Till o'er each parent's drooping head,
The daughter's crowning glory spread.

My Friends! in youth's romantic prime,
The golden age of man,

Like these twin Roses spend your Time,
—Life's little, less'ning span ;
Then be your breasts as free from cares,
Your hours as innocent as theirs.

And in the infant bud that blows
In your encircling arms,
Mark the dear promise of a rose,
The pledge of future charms,
That o'er your withering hours shall shine,
Fair, and more fair, as you decline ;—

Till, planted in that realm of rest,
Where Roses never die,
Amidst the gardens of the blest,
Beneath a stormless sky,
You flower afresh, like Aaron's rod,
That blossom'd at the sight of God.

TO AGNES.

Reply to some Lines, beginning, '*Arrest, O Time!*
'*thy fleeting course.*'

TIME will not check his eager flight,
Though gentle AGNES scold,
For 'tis the Sage's dear delight
To make young Ladies old.

Then listen, AGNES, friendship sings;
Seize fast his forelock grey,
And pluck from his careering wings
A feather every day.

Adorn'd with these, defy his rage,
And bid him plough your face,

For every furrow of old age
Shall be a line of grace.

Start not; old age is Virtue's prime;
Most lovely she appears,
Clad in the spoils of vanquish'd Time,
Down in the vale of years.

Beyond that vale, in boundless bloom,
The eternal mountains rise;
Virtue descends not to the tomb,
Her rest is in the skies.

AN EPITAPH.

ART thou a Man of honest mould,
With fervent heart, and soul sincere?
A husband, father, friend?—Behold
Thy Brother slumbers here.

The sun that wakes yon violet's bloom,
Once cheer'd his eye, now dark in death,
The wind that wanders o'er this tomb
Was once his vital breath.

The roving wind shall pass away,
The warming sun forsake the sky;
Thy Brother, in that dreadful day,
Shall live,—and never die.

THE

OLD MAN'S SONG.

SHALL Man of frail fruition boast?
Shall life be counted dear,
Oft but a moment, and, at most,
A momentary year?

There was a time,—that time is past,—
When, Youth! I bloom'd like thee;
A time will come,—'tis coming fast,
When thou shalt fade like me;—

Like me through varying seasons range,
And past enjoyments mourn;—
The fairest, sweetest Spring shall change
To Winter in its turn.

In infancy, my vernal prime,
When life itself was new,
Amusement pluck'd the wings of Time,
Yet swifter still he flew.

Summer my youth succeeded soon,
My sun ascended high,
And Pleasure held the reins till noon,
But Grief drove down the sky.

Like Autumn, rich in ripening corn,
Came manhood's sober reign;
My harvest-moon scarce fill'd her horn,
When she began to wane.

Close follow'd age, infirm old age,
The winter of my year;
When shall I fall before his rage,
To rise beyond the sphere!

I long to cast the chains away,
That hold my soul a slave,
To burst these dungeon-walls of clay,
Enfranchised from the grave.

Life lies in embryo,—never free
Till Nature yields her breath;
Till Time becomes Eternity,
And Man is born in Death.

THE

GLOW-WORM.

The Male of this Insect is said to be a Fly, which the Female Caterpillar attracts in the night by the lustre of her train.

When Evening closes Nature's eye,
The Glow-worm lights her little spark,
To captivate her favourite Fly,
And tempt the rover through the dark.

Conducted by a sweeter star
Than all that deck the fields above,
He fondly hastens from afar,
To sooth her solitude with love.

Thus, in this wilderness of years,
Amidst the world's perplexing gloom,
The transient torch of Hymen cheers
The pilgrim journeying to the tomb.

Unhappy he, whose hopeless eye
Turns to the light of love in vain;
Whose Cynosure is in the sky,
He on the dark and lonely main.

BOLEHILL TREES:

A conspicuous Plantation, encompassing a School-house and Play-ground, on a bleak eminence, at Barlow, in Derbyshire; on the one hand facing the high moors, on the other, overlooking a richly-cultivated, well-wooded, and mountainous country, near the seat of a Gentleman where the Writer has spent many happy hours.

Now peace to his ashes who planted yon trees,
That welcome my wandering eye!
In lofty luxuriance they wave with the breeze,
And resemble a grove in the sky:
On the brow of the mountain, uncultured and bleak,
They flourish in grandeur sublime,

Adorning its bald and majestical peak,
Like the lock on the forehead of Time.

A land-mark they rise :—to the stranger forlorn,
All night on the wild heath delay'd,
'Tis rapture to spy the young beauties of Morn
Unveiling behind their dark shade :
The homeward-bound husbandman joys to behold,
On the line of the grey evening scene,
Their branches yet gleaming with purple and gold,
And the sunset expiring between.

The maidens that gather the fruits of the moor,*
While weary and fainting they roam,
Through the blue dazzling distance of noon-light explore
The trees that remind them of home :
The children that range in the valley suspend
Their sports and in ecstasy gaze,

* Bilberries, cluster-berries, and crane-berries.

When they see the broad moon from the summit
ascend,
And their school-house and grove in a blaze.

O! sweet to my soul is that beautiful grove,
Awakening remembrance most dear;
—When lonely in anguish and exile I rove,
Wherever its glories appear,
It gladdens my spirit, it sooths from afar
With tranquil and tender delight,
It shines through my heart, like a hope-beaming star
Alone in the desert of night.

It tells me of moments of innocent bliss,
For ever and ever gone o'er
Like the light of a smile, like the balm of a kiss,
They were,—but they will be no more.
Yet wherefore of pleasures departed complain,
That leave such endearment behind?
Though the sun of their sweetness be sunk in the main,
Their twilight still rests on the mind.

Then peace to *his* ashes who planted those trees !
Supreme o'er the landscape they rise,
With simple and lovely magnificence please
All bosoms, and ravish all eyes :
Nor marble, nor brass could emblazon his fame,
Like his own sylvan trophies, that wave
In graceful memorial, and whisper his name,
And scatter their leaves on his grave.

Ah ! thus, when I sleep in the desolate tomb,
May the laurels I planted endure,
On the mountain of high immortality bloom,
'Midst lightning and tempest secure !
Then ages unborn shall their verdure admire,
And nations sit under their shade,
While my spirit, in secret, shall move o'er my lyre,
Aloft in their branches display'd.

Hence, dream of vain glory !—the light drop of dew,
That glows in the violet's eye,

In the splendour of morn to a fugitive view,
May rival a star of the sky;
But the violet is pluck'd, and the dew-drop is flown,
The star unextinguish'd shall shine;
Then mine be the laurels of virtue alone,
And the glories of Paradise mine.

THE MOLE-HILL.

Tell me, thou dust beneath my feet,
Thou dust that once hadst breath!
Tell me how many mortals meet
In this small hill of death?

The Mole, that scoops with curious toil
Her subterranean bed,
Thinks not she ploughs a human soil,
And mines among the dead.

But, O! where'er she turns the ground
My kindred earth I see;
Once every atom of this mound
Lived, breathed, and felt like me.

Like me these elder-born of clay
Enjoy'd the cheerful light,
Bore the brief burden of a day,
And went to rest at night.

Far in the regions of the morn,
The rising sun surveys
Palmyra's palaces forlorn,
Empurpled with his rays.

The spirits of the desert dwell
Where eastern grandeur shone,
And vultures scream, hyænas yell
Round Beauty's mouldering throne.

There the pale pilgrim, as he stands,
Sees, from the broken wall,
The shadow tottering on the sands,
Ere the loose fragment fall.

Destruction joys, amid those scenes,
To watch the sport of Fate,
While Time between the pillars leans,
And bows them with his weight.

But towers and temples crush'd by Time,
Stupendous wrecks! appear
To me less mournfully sublime
Than the poor Mole-hill here.

Through all this hillock's crumbling mould
Once the warm life-blood ran;
—Here thine original behold,
And here thy ruins, Man!

Methinks this dust yet heaves with breath;
Ten thousand pulses beat;
Tell me,—in this small hill of death,
How many mortals meet?

By wafting winds and flooding rains,
From ocean, earth, and sky,
Collected here, the frail remains
Of slumbering millions lie.

What scene of terror and amaze
Breaks through the twilight gloom?
What hand invisible displays
The secrets of the tomb?

All ages and all nations rise,
And every grain of earth
Beneath my feet, before mine eyes
Is startled into birth.

Like gliding mists the shadowy forms
Through the deep valley spread,
And like descending clouds in storms
Lower round the mountain's head.

O'er the wide champaign while they pass,
Their footsteps yield no sound,
Nor shake from the light trembling grass
A dew-drop to the ground.

Among the undistinguish'd hosts,
My wondering eyes explore
Awful, sublime, terrific ghosts,
Heroes and kings of yore :—

Tyrants, the comets of their kind,
Whose withering influence ran
Through all the promise of the mind,
And smote and mildew'd man :—

Sages, the pleiades of earth,
Whose genial aspects smiled,
And flowers and fruitage sprang to birth
O'er all the human wild.

Yon gloomy ruffian, gash'd and gored,
Was he, whose fatal skill
First beat the plough-share to a sword,
And taught the art to kill.

Behind him skulks a shade, bereft
Of fondly-worshipp'd Fame;
He built the Pyramids,—but left
No stone to tell his name.

Who is the chief, with visage dark
As tempests when they roar?
—The first who push'd his daring bark
Beyond the timid shore.

Through storms of death and seas of graves
He steer'd with stedfast eye;
His path was on the desert waves,
His compass in the sky.

The youth who lifts his graceful hand,
Struck the unshapen block,
And Beauty leap'd, at his command,
A Venus from the rock.

Trembling with ecstasy of thought,
Behold the Grecian maid,
Whom love's enchanting impulse taught
To trace a slumberer's shade.

Sweet are the thefts of love;—she stole
His image while he lay,
Kindled the shadow to a soul,
And breathed that soul through clay.

Yon listening nymph, who looks behind,
With countenance of fire,
Heard midnight music in the wind,
—And framed the Æolian lyre.

All hail!—The Sire of Song appears,
The Muse's eldest born;
The sky-lark in the dawn of years,
The poet of the morn.

He from the depth of cavern'd woods,
That echoed to his voice,
Bade mountains, valleys, winds, and floods,
And earth and heaven rejoice.

Though charm'd to meekness while he sung,
The wild beasts round him ran,
This was the triumph of his tongue,—
It tamed the heart of man.

Dim through the mist of twilight times
The ghost of Cyrus walks;
Behind him, red with glorious crimes,
The son of Ammon stalks.

Relentless Hannibal, in pride
Of sworn, fix'd hatred, lowers ;
Cæsar,—'tis Brutus at his side,—
In peerless grandeur towers.

With moonlight softness Helen's charms
Dissolve the spectred gloom,
The leading star of Greece in arms,
Portending Ilion's doom.

But Homer ;—see the bard arise ;
And hark !—he strikes the lyre ;
The Dardan warriors lift their eyes,
The Argive Chiefs respire.

And while his music rolls along,
The towers of Troy sublime,
Raised by the magic breath of song,
Mock the destroyer Time.

For still around the eternal walls
The storms of battle rage;
And Hector conquers, Hector falls,
Bewept in every age.

Genius of Homer! were it mine
To track thy fiery car,
And in thy sunset course to shine
A radiant evening star,—

What theme, what laurel might the Muse
Reclaim from ages fled?
What realm-restoring hero chuse
To summon from the dead?

Yonder his shadow flits away:
—Thou shalt not thus depart;
Stay, thou transcendant spirit, stay,
And tell me who thou art!

'Tis Alfred:—In the rolls of Fame,
And on a midnight page,
Blazes his broad refulgent name,
The watch-light of his age.

A Danish winter, from the north,
Howl'd o'er the British wild,
But Alfred, like the spring, brake forth,
And all the desert smiled.

Back to the deep he roll'd the waves,
By mad invasion hurl'd;
His voice was liberty to slaves,
Defiance to the world.

And still that voice o'er land and sea
Shall Albion's foes appal;
The race of Alfred *will* be free;
Hear it, and tremble, Gaul!

But lo! the phantoms fade in flight,
Like fears that cross the mind,
Like meteors gleaming through the night,
Like thunders on the wind.

The vision of the tomb is past;
Beyond it, who can tell
In what mysterious region cast
Immortal spirits dwell?

I know not, but I soon shall know,
When life's sore conflicts cease,
When this desponding heart lies low,
And I shall rest in peace.

For see, on Death's bewildering wave,
The rainbow Hope arise,
A bridge of glory o'er the grave,
That bends beyond the skies.

From earth to heaven it swells and shines,
The pledge of bliss to man;
Time with eternity combines,
And grasps them in a span.

THE

CAST-AWAY SHIP.

The subjects of the two following Poems were suggested by the loss of the Blenheim, commanded by Sir Thomas Trowbridge, which was separated from the vessels under its convoy, during a storm, in the Indian Ocean.—The Admiral's son afterwards made a voyage, without success, in search of his father.—Trowbridge was one of Nelson's captains at the Battle of the Nile, but his ship unfortunately ran a-ground as he was bearing down on the enemy.

A VESSEL sailed from Albion's shore,
To utmost India bound;
Its crest a hero's pendant bore,
With broad sea-laurels crown'd

In many a fierce and noble fight,
Though foil'd on that Egyptian night,
When Gallia's host was drown'd,
And Nelson o'er his country's foes,
Like the destroying angel rose.

A gay and gallant company,
With shouts that rend the air,
For warrior-wreaths upon the sea,
Their joyful brows prepare;
But many a maiden's sigh was sent,
And many a mother's blessing went,
And many a father's prayer,
With that exulting ship to sea,
With that undaunted company.

The deep, that, like a cradled child,
In breathing slumber lay,
More warmly blush'd, more sweetly smiled,
As rose the kindling day;

Through ocean's mirror, dark and clear,
Reflected skies and clouds appear
In morning's rich array;
The land is lost, the waters glow,
'Tis heaven above, around, below.

Majestic o'er the sparkling tide,
See the tall vessel sail,
With swelling wings, in shadowy pride,
A swan before the gale;
Deep-laden merchants rode behind;
—But, fearful of the fickle wind,
Britannia's cheek grew pale,
When, lessening through the flood of light,
Their leader vanish'd from her sight.

Oft had she hail'd its trophied prow,
Victorious from the war,
And banner'd masts, that would not bow,
Though riv'n with many a scar;

Oft had her oaks their tribute brought,
To rib its flanks, with thunder fraught;
But late her evil star
Had cursed it on its homeward way,
—‘ The spoiler shall become the prey.’

Thus warn’d, Britannia’s anxious heart
Throbb’d with prophetic woe,
When she beheld that ship depart,
A fair ill-omen’d show!
So views the mother, through her tears,
The daughter of her hopes and fears,
When hectic beauties glow
On the frail cheek, where sweetly bloom
The roses of an early tomb.

No fears the brave adventurers knew;
Peril and death they spurn’d;
Like full-fledged eagles forth they flew;
Jove’s birds, that proudly burn’d,

In battle-hurricanes to wield
His lightnings on the billowy field;
And many a look they turn'd
O'er the blue waste of waves, to spy
A Gallic ensign in the sky.

But not to crush the vaunting foe,
In combat on the main,
Nor perish by a glorious blow,
In mortal triumph slain,
Was their unutterable fate;
—That story would the Muse relate,
The song might rise in vain;
In Ocean's deepest, darkest bed
The secret slumbers with the dead.

On India's long-expecting strand
Their sails were never furl'd;
Never on known or friendly land,
By storms their keel was hurl'd;

Their native soil no more they trod;
They rest beneath no hallow'd sod;
Throughout the living world,
This sole memorial of their lot
Remains,—they *were*, and they are *not*.

The Spirit of the Cape * pursued
Their long and toilsome way;
At length, in ocean solitude,
He sprang upon his prey;
'Havoc!' the shipwreck-demon cried,
Loosed all his tempests on the tide,
Gave all his lightnings play:
The abyss recoil'd before the blast,
Firm stood the seaman till the last.

---

* The Cape of Good Hope, formerly called the Cape of Storms.—*See* CAMOENS' *Lusiad*, book V.

Like shooting stars, athwart the gloom
  The merchant-sails were sped;
Yet oft, before its midnight doom,
  They mark'd the high mast head
Of that devoted vessel, tost
By winds and floods, now seen, now lost;
  While every gun-fire spread
A dimmer flash, a fainter roar;
—At length they saw, they heard no more.

There are to whom that ship was dear,
  For love and kindred's sake;
When these the voice of Rumour hear,
  Their inmost heart shall quake,
Shall doubt, and fear, and wish, and grieve,
Believe, and long to unbelieve,
  But never cease to ache;
Still doom'd, in sad suspense, to bear
The Hope that keeps alive Despair.

THE SEQUEL.

He sought his Sire from shore to shore,
  He sought him day by day;
The prow he track'd was seen no more,
  Breasting the ocean-spray;
Yet, as the winds his voyage sped,
He sail'd above his father's head,
  Unconscious where it lay,
Deep, deep beneath the rolling main:
—He sought his Sire; he sought in vain.

Son of the brave! no longer weep;
  Still with affection true,
Along the wild disastrous deep,
  Thy father's course pursue;

Full in his wake of glory steer,
His spirit prompts thy bold career,
His compass guides thee through ;
So, while thy thunders awe the sea,
Britain shall find thy Sire in thee.

M. S.

TO THE MEMORY OF

'A Female whom Sickness had reconciled to the 'Notes of Sorrow,'

Who corresponded with the Author under this signature, on the first publication of his Poems, in 1806, but died soon after; when her real name and merits were disclosed to him by one of her surviving friends.

My Song of Sorrow reach'd her ear;
She raised her languid head to hear,
And, smiling in the arms of Death,
Consoled me with her latest breath.

What is the Poet's highest aim,
His richest heritage of fame?

—To track the warrior's fiery road,
With havoc, spoil, destruction strow'd,
While nations bleed along the plains,
Dragg'd at his chariot wheels in chains?
—With fawning hand to woo the lyre,
Profanely steal celestial fire,
And bid an idol's altar blaze
With incense of unhallow'd praise?
—With syren strains, Circean art,
To win the ear, beguile the heart,
Wake the wild passions into rage,
And please and prostitute the age?

NO!—to the generous Bard belong
Diviner themes and purer song:
—To hail Religion from above,
Descending in the form of Love,
And pointing through a world of strife
The narrow way that leads to life:
—To pour the balm of heavenly rest
Through Sorrow's agonizing breast;

With Pity's tender arms embrace
The orphans of a kindred race;
And in one zone of concord bind
The lawless spoilers of mankind:
—To sing in numbers boldly free
The wars and woes of liberty;
The glory of her triumphs tell,
Her nobler suffering when she fell,*
Girt with the phalanx of the brave,
Or widow'd on the patriot's grave,
Which tyrants tremble to pass by,
Ev'n on the car of Victory.

These are the Bard's sublimest views,
The angel visions of the Muse,
That o'er his morning slumbers shine;
These are his themes,—and these were mine.

---

* 'Pui val d'ogni vittoria un bel soffrire.'
GAETANA PASSERINI.

—But pale Despondency, that stole
The light of gladness from my soul,
While Youth and Folly blindfold ran
The giddy circle up to Man,
Breathed a dark spirit through my lyre,
Dimm'd the noon-radiance of my fire,
And cast a mournful evening hue
O'er every scene my fancy drew.
Then though the proud despised my strain,
It flow'd not from my heart in vain;
The lay of freedom, fervour, truth,
Was dear to undissembling youth,
From manly breasts drew generous sighs,
And Virtue's tears from Beauty's eyes.

My Song of Sorrow reach'd HER ear;
She raised her languid head to hear,
And, smiling in the arms of Death,
She bless'd me with her latest breath.

A secret hand to me convey'd
The thoughts of that inspiring Maid;
They came like voices on the wind,
Heard in the stillness of the mind,
When round the Poet's twilight walk
Aerial beings seem to talk.
Not the twin stars of Leda shine
With vernal influence more benign,
Nor sweeter, in the sylvan vale,
Sings the lone-warbling nightingale,
Than through my shades her lustre broke,
Than to my griefs her spirit spoke.

My fancy form'd her young and fair,
Pure as her sister lilies were,
Adorn'd with meekest maiden grace,
With every charm of soul and face,
That Virtue's awful eye approves,
And fond Affection dearly loves;
Heaven in her open aspect seen,
Her Maker's image in her mien.

Such was the picture Fancy drew,
In lineaments divinely true;
The Muse, by her mysterious art,
Had shewn her likeness to my heart,
And every faithful feature brought
O'er the clear mirror of my thought.
—But she was waning to the tomb;
The worm of death was in her bloom
Yet as the mortal frame declined,
Strong through the ruins rose the mind:
As the dim moon, when night ascends,
Slow in the east the darkness rends,
Through melting clouds, by gradual gleams,
Pours the mild splendour of her beams,
Then bursts in triumph o'er the pole,
Free as a disembodied soul!
Thus while the veil of flesh decay'd,
Her beauties brighten'd through the shade;
Charms which her lowly heart conceal'd
In nature's weakness were reveal'd;

And still the unrobing spirit cast
Diviner glories to the last,
Dissolved its bonds, and clear'd its flight,
Emerging into perfect light.

Yet shall the friends who loved her weep,
Though shrined in peace the sufferer sleep,
Though rapt to heaven the saint aspire,
With seraph guards, on wings of fire;
Yet shall they weep;—for oft and well
Remembrance shall her story tell,
Affection of her virtues speak,
With beaming eye and burning cheek,
Each action, word, and look recal
The last, the loveliest of all,
When on the lap of Death she lay,
Serenely smiled her soul away,
And left surviving Friendship's breast
Warm with the sunset of her rest.

O Thou, who wert on earth unknown,
Companion of my thought alone,
Unchanged in heaven to me thou art,
Still hold communion with my heart;
Cheer thou my hopes, exalt my views,
Be the good angel of my Muse;
—And if to thine approving ear
My plaintive numbers once were dear;
If, falling round thy dying hours,
Like evening dews on closing flowers,
They sooth'd thy pains, and through thy soul
With melancholy sweetness stole,
HEAR ME:——When slumber from mine eyes,
That roll in irksome darkness, flies;
When the lorn spectre of unrest
At conscious midnight haunts my breast;
When former joys and present woes,
And future fears are all my foes;
Spirit of my departed friend!
Calm through the troubled gloom descend,

With strains of triumph on thy tongue,
Such as to dying saints are sung;
Such as in Paradise the ear
Of God himself delights to hear:
—Come all unseen; be only known
By Zion's harp, of higher tone,
Warbling to thy mysterious voice;
Bid my desponding powers rejoice;
And I will listen to thy lay,
Till night and sorrow flee away,
Till gladness o'er my bosom rise,
And morning kindle round the skies.

If thus to me, sweet saint, be given
To learn from thee the hymns of heaven,
Thine inspiration will impart
Seraphic ardours to my heart;
My voice thy music shall prolong,
And echo thy entrancing song;

My lyre, with sympathy divine,
Shall answer every chord of thine,
Till their consenting tones give birth
To harmonies unknown on earth.
Then shall my thoughts, in living fire,
Sent down from heaven, to heaven aspire,
My verse through lofty measures rise,
A scale of glory to the skies,
Resembling, on each hallow'd theme,
The ladder of the Patriarch's dream,
O'er which descending angels shone,
On earthly missions from the throne,
Returning by the steps they trod
Up to the Paradise of GOD.

THE END.

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